

The Book of Jonah

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The Book of Jonah

Chapter 1

The Ship and The Fish

Israel continued to disregard our Father and His commandments and His instructions. Yeah, they were prospering but only because the economy was good and even an idiot could probably make money in this environment.

So our Father decided that He was going to use the Assyrians to chastise His children and Jonah was commissioned to make that happen.

Now, Jonah loved his people and he did not want to see them taken into bondage and live a life that would be full of turmoil and hardship, so he decided **NOT** to do what our Father was telling him to do. He would simply go away, his people would continue living as they had been and life would be good.

But when our Father makes His mind up it takes a lot to change it. And He will change it if you approach Him in such a manner that befits the situation.

But here in Nineveh He's not going to change His mind.

Verse 1...

Jonah 1:1 Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,

Here comes the instructions from our Father that Jonah does not want to hear.

Jonah 1:2 Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

This was the first and only time that a prophet would be sent directly to the pagan and Nineveh was a pagan city. Another part of our Father's Plan was to humiliate Israel by having the people of Nineveh be converted by the first attempt of Jonah whereby many national prophets had spoken to Israel and all of them had been ignored.

The pagans responded to the prophet the first time; Israel has not responded after many prophets.

Jonah 1:3 But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

Gonna put his butt on a ship and be gone with the tide and the wind.

Jonah, like a lot of us, still thinks that he can make himself invisible to our Father simply by going someplace else, but what he doesn't realize is that our Father **IS ALWAYS SOMEPLACE ELSE**. He's everywhere at the same time.

It's called **OMNIPRESENCE**.

Jonah 1:4 But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.

Now, it's pretty obvious that our Father can control the weather but does He control the weather today? In our daily lives?

The answer truly is an emphatic **NO**. The earth is not a dead planet, like the moon, it lives and breathes. Parts of it dies off while other parts regenerate and come to life again.

The changing weather patterns are simply a result of the tilting of the earth to the sun and the ever twirling high and low pressure systems, sometimes as big as the continent of the US. The air, the atmosphere, lives and breathes, it moves and undulates. At times it's violent as different systems clash against each other and at times it is eerily calm.

I have seen the water in the Gulf of Mexico, while standing on the beach, so still and motionless that it looked like a massive mirror as far as my eye could see.

Our Father can use the weather as His tool but does He use it to affect or change the life of one individual soul? I guess the only good answer is: probably, if He decides to do so.

Jonah 1:5 Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep.

Jonah did not care. He went down into the bowels of the ship, laid down and fell fast asleep. Now, it didn't say he took a snooze or that he caught a catnap or maybe rested his head for a bit...no, he fell fast asleep.

And he was willing to die for his people. He did not want these heathen pagans to find the Lord and repent of their sins because if they did the Israelites were going into bondage by the Assyrians.

Jonah 1:6 So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.

What the heck are you doing sleeping, Jonah? We're about to die and sink to the bottom of the sea...get off your butt, call your God by whatever name it is that you call Him and rectify this situation.

Jonah 1:7 And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

Now, the crew has figured out that Jonah is the reason that they've lost the cargo and will probably lose their lives this night if something isn't done right now.

Jonah 1:8 Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou?

Lots of questions for Jonah, from the crew and we know the answers.

Jonah 1:9 And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land.

You'll notice that Jonah said Hebrew and not Israelite. Why? Because "*Israelite*" was what they called themselves while they were among themselves. To the outside world they were Hebrew.

★ *Hebrew*-- OT:5680 *`Ibriy* (ib-ree'); patronymic from OT:5677; an *Eberite* (i.e. Hebrew) or descendant of Eber:

★ OT:5677 *`Eber* (ay'-ber); the same as OT:5676; *Eber, the name of two patriarchs and four Israelites*:

★ OT:5676 *`eber* (ay'-ber); from OT:5674; properly, *a region across*; but used only adverbially (with or without a preposition) *on the opposite side* (especially of the Jordan; usually meaning the east):

★ OT:5674 *`abar* (aw-bar'); a primitive root; **to cross over**; used very widely of any transition (literal or figurative; transitive, intransitive, intensive, causative); specifically, to cover (in copulation):

Generally, it means "*from across the river*", the river in question being the Euphrates. The word was first used of Abram by the Canaanites because he had crossed the Euphrates River.

It can also mean "*someone from the East*".

Jonah 1:10 Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

The cargo is lost, the boat is creaking and taking on water, the wind is howling, the crew is scared to death and, for the life of them, they cannot figure out why this man would do this to them.

Jonah 1:11 Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous.

Now they're getting close to a solution.

Jonah 1:12 And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.

This sounds like an excellent suggestion to Jonah because he wants to die anyway and drowning will do the job nicely.

Jonah 1:13 Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.

The crew tried one more time to bring the boat to land to keep it from sinking but to no avail. It was useless.

Jonah 1:14 Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee.

These guys are so scared that they're praying to Jonah's God, our Father, and not their gods any longer!

Jonah 1:15 So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging.

So the crew says, ok, Jonah, up and over you go and as soon as they threw him overboard **THE WIND QUIT BLOWING AND THE WATER BECAME CALM**. Good grief. What now?

Jonah 1:16 Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows.

What kind of *sacrifice* could they possibly offer at this point in time?

Jonah 1:17 Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. KJV

The wind quit blowing, the water became calm and Jonah disappeared into the mouth of a great big fish.

We're going to find out that the experiences of Jonah are a "*type*" of the Savior to come because the three days and three nights that he spent in the belly of the fish, our Lord would use that example nine times to show that He too would spend that amount of time in the grave.

What did He do when He was there for those three days and nights?

I'll tell you later.

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Chapter 2

Jonah's Prayer and Thanksgiving

There's no earthly reason why anyone should be intimidated by these twelve Minor Prophets, other than somebody telling them that they're too hard to understand and that it's best to let someone with "religious authority" tell you what's in them.

Our Father had these books written to **US**, **YOU** and me. And do you know what the good part really is? These prophets didn't run around telling people how important they were; they didn't dress as though they were royalty, they didn't demand that they be treated special.

Nope, Obadiah walked behind his sheep every day, sometimes stepping in a warm pile of recently manufactured manure, no doubt. He simply cleaned his sandal off, as he had done a thousand times before, and kept on walking.

He probably had a good dog that helped him keep these rascals together. That 'ole dog kept him company for weeks on end when there was no human contact as they wandered through the desert looking for food for the sheep to eat.

Amos was another shepherd who also tended to the Sycamore Trees. They were good, honest people, like many of us today. The Holy Spirit provided the words for them to say and they expected nothing in return.

So, when somebody tells you that you aren't smart enough or privileged enough to read **ALL THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE**, that you need to listen to them or come to **THEIR** church, because salvation can only be accomplished **THROUGH** them or their church, you tell them to go straight to hell and you go back outside and tend to your sheep.

Jonah, verse 1.

Jonah 2:1 Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly,

Wow. All he wanted to do was get away so that our Father **could not** use him to preach to the Ninevites and when he jumps off this ship in the middle of a storm, he lands right inside the mouth of a huge fish. That **HAS** to ruin your day.

Jonah 2:2 And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice.

But while he's inside this fish what does he do? He prays to our Father!

Jonah 2:3 For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me.

He tried to get away from serving our Father and it took a fish to snag him and stop him.

Jonah 2:4 Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.

He's beginning to come around, he's about to let the Holy Spirit change his heart.

Jonah 2:5 The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head.

This obviously tells us that he went to the bottom and that the water was not all that deep because the weeds wrapped around his head, probably making him feel trapped.

Jonah 2:6 I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God.

This is the grave. He was brought back to life exactly as the Lord would be after His death on the cross. This is why Jesus used this example so often when explaining things to the Pharisees.

I'm sure that there have been times when our lives have hit the bottom and we felt that things would never get better or change for the better but they do and they will. Sometimes it takes a very long time for that to happen, maybe even a lifetime?

Just remember that 100 years compared to billions of years is nothing. If we love our Father we should be able to do that time standing on one foot! But we make each little thing in our lives so terribly important to us and we listen to other people far too often and at times it's a real struggle to figure out exactly what's best for us.

Jonah 2:7 When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.

Do you think that your soul might faint within you after going through something like this? Now, pay close attention to this next verse.

Jonah 2:8 They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.

Let's reword this into today's language: those people that listen to religious lies give up the right to expect unmerited favor from our Father.

Where would you get religious lies? From your local church, your local preacher who teaches traditions made up by religious systems....where else? And the really sick part is that you go and search them out! You try to find them so that you can listen to them!

"Hey, let's go to that new church over at that abandoned strip mall behind Wal-Mart's. I hear they got a pretty good gig going on over there."

Do you know who gives you mercy or unmerited favor and why? Jesus Christ gives you that unmerited favor because He died on the cross for the sins of all men, women and children and to receive this unmerited favor all you have to do is repent of your sins through His shed blood and it's yours. It cost **YOU** nothing! It cost **HIM** plenty!

And yet you turn your back on Him and go to some party that Satan is giving over at some abandoned strip mall? Yeah, that's you, you religious freak. Looking for that religious high.

Jonah 2:9 But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.

Today, I will spiritually sacrifice to Him with thanksgiving. I will thank Him for sacrificing His life for mine.

Jonah 2:10 And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land. KJV

Now, this wasn't done on some deserted section of the beach where no one would see it because that would defeat the entire purpose. There had to be some Ninevites or Assyrians present when our Father caused Jonah to come out of that fish.

Understand this as well: the Ninevites worshipped a “*fish god*” by the name of *Dagon* and when this particular fish vomited out a live, walking, talking human being it took very little for these people to believe in our Lord after that.

Let's go to the New Testament and see how our Lord would use these events to explain to the people that He might be crucified and die a physical death but in three days and nights He would return again in a spiritual body.

Matthew 12:38 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.

Pagans. No faith. Always needing a sign.

Matthew 12:39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

A sign has already been given to you.....have you not read it?

Matthew 12:40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

I've done a work on the meaning of the *three days and three nights* and if you want a deeper understanding I would recommend that you read it. Well worth the time. Not my words but His Words.

Matthew 12:41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. KJV

These few people believed on the Father after seeing Jonah come out of this whale and Jesus Christ Himself would give that opportunity to the entire world if they would just believe and follow Him.

The whale burped, out came Jonah and our Father picks it up from there in the next chapter.

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Chapter 3

Correction of Jonah

Well, Jonah is out of the whales belly and back on dry land and is about to receive a second set of instructions from our Father:

Jonah 3:1 And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying,

Stand up, brush the sand off your clothes, tell all those people standing around gawking at you to go home and get yourself into the city.

Jonah 3:2 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

I think that our Father is a bit tired of fooling around with this guy so He simply tells him to go to that city and speak what He tells him to speak.

Jonah 3:3 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.

Now, this could get a little confusing if we let it and, of course, I'm not going to let it. In verse 3 it says *city of three days' journey* while in verse 4 it says *enter into the city a day's journey*.

According to Easton's Bible Dictionary, to encircle the city or to walk around its outer limits would take three days but it only took Jonah one day to walk to the city from where he was on the banks of the Tigris River. It's population is estimated at about 600,000 to 1 million at the time of Jonah.

Jonah 3:4 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

The number forty, in Scripture, always means probation or a probationary period and that's what it means to the residents of Nineveh.

"Y'all got forty days to get it together and then I'm going to destroy it all, right down to the ground level."

Jonah 3:5 So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

Once word of Jonah being spewed out on the beach of the river reached the people in the city, the word probably spread like wildfire and when Jonah walked into town it was probably some kind of an event.

They may have worshipped a fish god, **Dagon**, but here, standing before them, was **God's man** and whatever it is that he has to say, they are certainly going to listen. And it didn't take long before they all turned their hearts to our Father.

Jonah 3:6 For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

From the greatest to the least, they all began to worship our Father. I mean, this is King Solomon II, the King of Assyria, sitting in ashes and worshipping our Father!

Jonah 3:7 And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:

After the Crucifixion salvation was open to the Gentile as well but here we have a fast that even included the animal world. This is some kind of belief.

Jonah 3:8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.

Destroy those idols and turn from your wicked ways. Can you imagine, just for a moment, what this world would be like if that happened world-wide today? Wow.

Jonah 3:9 Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

What they're hoping for now is that our Father will turn off His anger and repent and not destroy the whole lot of them.

This whole city was a center of commerce and depravity and for the entire population to turn 180 degrees and walk away from those sins and embrace the love and saving grace of our Father, what will the Father do?

Jonah 3:10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not. KJV

Using one nation to correct another nation was not unusual for our Father to do but in this case He did repent and did not destroy them. What was it that probably made Him decide not to destroy them? He saw their **works**. He saw their **faith through their works**.

Obviously, they didn't just give Him a lot of lip-service, they actually **DID WHAT THEY SAID THEY WOULD DO**. And Father can see your faith through your works and what is it that you can take with you to the Judgment Day? Your works, of course. That's the only thing that you can take with you.

Good intentions won't cut it and it looks like these people instinctively knew that.

Show me your works and I'll see your faith because what? **Faith without works is dead!**

James 2:14 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? KJV

*James 2:17 Even so **faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.** KJV*

The Book of Jonah

Chapter 4

Jonah 4:1 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.

Why was Jonah angry? Because the entire city of Nineveh, all 600,000 or more of them, gave up idol worship and began loving and praying to our Father.

Jonah believed that if Nineveh were destroyed by our Father that He would not use the Assyrians to put His people in captivity, that He would leave them alone and they could continue to snub their noses at Him and worship idols.

As it turns out the prophet that was to preach the words of our Father to them is now angry that the words of our Father saved them. And he failed and his people will now go into captivity.

Jonah 4:2 And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

Now Jonah is going to let his anger boil over a bit when he speaks to the Father. He's saying that he saw this happening early on, that the Ninevites would be saved by the words of our Father. And now his people are going to be imprisoned.

Jonah 4:3 Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live.

So Jonah starts his own pity party. Oh, it's better for me to die and all that nonsense.

Jonah 4:4 Then said the Lord, Doest thou well to be angry?

Father looks down on him and says that it's good for him to be angry. Builds character and all that.

Jonah 4:5 So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city.

So, Jonah picks up his stuff and leaves to sulk on a hill just outside the city. He looked around for some branches and such and built a booth, a *succah*. The *succah* was a small hut that was usually built during the festival of the Feast of Tabernacles to remind the Jews of their hardships of their past pilgrim state.

Father knew that this pitiful little hut would not provide much shade for Jonah, as his pity party continued, so He helped Jonah out a little.

Jonah 4:6 And the Lord God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd.

Let's understand what this *gourd* is:

★ *Gourd*--OT:7021 *qiyqayown* (kee-kaw-yone'); perhaps from OT:7006; the gourd (as nauseous):

★ *Root Word*_OT:7006 *qayah* (kaw-yaw'); a primitive root; to vomit: KJV - spue.

Our Father is having some fun with Jonah because this gourd, this plant, even though it did have huge leaves on it that would provide a good bit of shade for Jonah, it really smelled bad. It stunk! Even our word "vomit" comes from the name of this plant. It will really make you nauseous.

And Jonah was glad to get it but what he didn't do was thank our Father for it. 'Ole Jonah just can't seem to do anything right at the moment.

Jonah 4:7 But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.

So the next day our Father prepared a worm that would eat at the gourd and cause it to die, thus taking away the shade that Jonah had.

Jonah 4:8 And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.

And boy it got hot that day without the shade. The east wind is coming in from across the desert and the sun beat down on Jonah's head and he fainted. When he came to, he just wished that he would die.

Jonah 4:9 And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.

Father asks Jonah if he is PO'd at the gourd as well and Jonah says, yep, and he'll probably be angry until he dies.

Jonah 4:10 Then said the Lord, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night:

Jonah didn't do one blessed thing to not only deserve the gourd but nothing to make it grow when it did so why was he so mad at it?

Jonah 4:11 And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle? KJV

Our Father asks Jonah if He should have just gone ahead and killed 120,000 people who were so pitiful that they didn't know their right hand from their left and should He kill all the cattle as well?

I guess it's good that the book ends here.

What's to be learned from it? As far as the last few verses, don't ever get angry with our Father. If you go against Him, if you approach and treat Him as another human being, you are going to get your head thumped again and again and again.

As far as the beginning of the book? It doesn't matter how deep into sin you have descended, He will always reach out to you by sending someone to TRY to bring you back to Him again. And if you're waiting for someone to knock on your door and ask you to come home to Him you are sadly mistaken.

The person being sent and the asking will be done through the book of His Word, the Bible. That's where the communication starts and ends. What did He say? Behold I have told you all things through the prophets.

Get back on the right track. Take a good look at your preacher and see if what he talks about on Sunday morning even slightly resembles what's contained in the Book. If it doesn't maybe you should change something because if you don't, you may be in for a world of spiritual hurt.

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